



January 30, 2008

Senator Curt Thompson  
Georgia State Senate District 5  
323-B Coverdell Legislative Office Building  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

DRAFT

Re: **Transit Planning Board (TPB) Support for SB 332**

Dear Senator Thompson:

The Transit Planning Board (TPB) would like to formally go on record in support of SB 332. Our mission is to facilitate cooperation for the operation, administration and provision of more efficient transit services to our entire region. Thus, our support for SB 332 is based on our mission. Our growing regional transit system is exactly why we need SB 332 in order to give Atlanta regional commuters a travel alternative to sitting in congested traffic. SB 332 is important because it allows us to start thinking about a “regional” rail system, using the mechanism available through the existing MARTA Act. We must begin today to think about how we want a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system for the Atlanta region to look 20 years from now, and SB 332 gives us one more tool to facilitate an efficient and affective regional transit network.

So that you may know who the TPB is, please allow me to provide a brief overview. The concept for the TPB grew out of a regional transit institutional analysis conducted by ARC in 2005. We were created through joint resolutions between MARTA, The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to facilitate regional cooperation in the development and delivery of transit services, to develop a regional transit vision plan and to advocate for transit funding. Our Board consists of the County Commission Chairs of the 10 county Atlanta regions, including Spalding County, the Mayor of Atlanta, three appointees from the Governor, and the chairs of the Boards of Directors for GRTA, MARTA, GDOT and the MARTA General Manager. We have the right people at the table for regional decision making and action. For the past year and a half, we have been providing a forum for the resolution and advancement of regional transit issues and working on a regional vision for transit. We are now in the process of sharing that vision with the public and documenting their input. We are also serving as a resource for the documentation of transit benefits for our region and state in support of efforts to secure a new, dedicated source of transportation funding. Simultaneously, we are working to come up with an agreed upon recommendation for the governance of a regional transit network.

Thank you for your leadership in sponsoring this bill and for the opportunity to express our support . We look forward to working with you on a bright future for our region and the State of Georgia.

Sincerely,  
TRANSIT PLANNING BOARD

Eldrin Bell, Chair

Doug Tollett, Vice Chair

Cc: TPB Directors  
Dr. Beverly Scott, MARTA